



STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
DARRELL V. MCGRAW, JR.  
CONSUMER PROTECTION DIVISION  
1-800-368-8808 or 304-558-8986

# Press Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **AG McGraw Sues to Stop CCDN's Deceptive Debt Settlement Business**

CHARLESTON: West Virginia Attorney General Darrell McGraw has sued to enjoin Illinois attorney Robert K. Lock, Jr., New York attorney Philip M. Manger, and their company CCDN, LLC, d/b/a Credit Collections Defense Network, from practicing law in West Virginia and to stop their unfair and deceptive debt settlement business.

According to the Attorney General's Office, CCDN, LLC – a Nevada company based in Chicago with additional offices in Brick, NJ – along with lawyers Lock of Chicago and Manger of Newtown, CT, claim to assist financially struggling consumers with a debt elimination scheme using legal methods to invalidate debt and allow consumers to walk away from their credit card balances. However, the group's tactics include providing form-letter answers to debt collection lawsuits and encouraging consumers to claim that they never borrowed the money from the credit card companies.

After following CCDN's debt elimination plan, the company asserts, consumers' credit scores dramatically improve and their debts are resolved. However, for several West Virginians who followed CCDN's system, credit scores took a nose dive.

"Although the debt settlement approach to debt relief may work for some persons, the service has legal consequences and should only be offered in West Virginia by persons licensed to practice law in the state," McGraw explained. "My office will continue to scrutinize the debt relief industry to protect consumers from excessive fees as well as from schemes that can leave them worse off, in dire financial circumstances."

Debt settlement businesses, increasingly common and sometimes controversial, have emerged as consumer credit card debt ballooned over the past few years. Debt settlers such as CCDN offer to create repayment plans to help consumers pay down outstanding debts at a deep discount or eliminate the debts altogether, supposedly allowing consumers to avoid lawsuits and bankruptcy. Payments are made by consumers to the debt settlers, who in turn claim to negotiate with creditors to reduce the amount of debt owed by the consumers.

Anyone wishing to file a complaint about a consumer matter or to alert the Attorney General about unfair or deceptive practices may do so by calling the Consumer Protection Hot Line, 1-800-368-8808, or by obtaining a complaint online at [www.wvago.gov](http://www.wvago.gov).

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